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DR. FRIEDLÄNDER ON THE JEWISH RELIGION.<sup>1</sup>

WHAT is orthodox Judaism? What are its tenets and its practices? If any Englishman had sought an answer to these questions, it would have been difficult to tell him of any book where he could have found one. Now, at last, a book has been written, not for children, but for adults, containing a full answer, and calling itself emphatically "*The Jewish religion.*" That is naturally what orthodoxy claims to be. It cannot recognise any other phase of Judaism except its own.

The importance of the work before us lies therefore partly in its uniqueness. It is, so far as I know, the only book of the kind in the English language. Nor are there, I believe, many books like it in either France or Germany, written, that is, from the same frankly orthodox point of view, and for grown-up people, not for children. This last qualification is by no means superfluous. For in a text-book for children, one never knows how far a man may have either expanded or watered down his own belief to suit the supposed needs and faculties of children. In a book written for adults there is no reserve or qualification of that kind. It offers us food for men, and not pap for babes. But there is another reason why Dr. Friedländer's book is of such grave importance, and deserves to be scrutinised with the most anxious care. Its author occupies a place of peculiar trust and responsibility. He speaks with authority. He is the head of what is practically the only theological college in England for the training of Jewish ministers. Through his hands almost

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<sup>1</sup> *The Jewish Religion*, by M. Friedländer. London: 1891.

every aspirant to that high office passes; his influence and his teaching are therefore disseminated throughout the very numerous congregations which own the sway of the British Chief Rabbi. When such a man writes a book of some five hundred pages on the Jewish Religion, his work is at once invested with a peculiar interest. It may be assumed that the matter and spirit of the written page reflect the matter and spirit of his oral teaching. In Dr. Friedländer's book we not only learn for the first time what modern Jewish orthodoxy in England actually is, but we learn also what is the Judaism of the Jews' College, what is the Judaism which nearly every Jewish minister for the last twenty-five years has been taught in the past, and which nearly every candidate for the ministry is still being taught to-day.

All this we do unquestionably learn from Dr. Friedländer's book. If the book is a faithful description of orthodoxy—and the author's position would lead us to suppose that this it must be—no one, having read it, can be in any doubt as to what orthodox Judaism really is. One of the most prominent features of the work is its transparent sincerity. Nothing is kept back ; there is no hedging, and there is no reserve. The author tells his story fully, and reveals to us his entire creed. His touching and child-like faith enables him to state all his belief with perfect and absolute simplicity. He is never afraid of his opinions, and seldom, consciously perhaps never, attempts to cover them, however strange they may sound to the uninitiated, with any veneer of rationalistic explanation. I shall have to criticise Dr. Friedländer's book in some detail, but before passing on to criticism, I felt impelled to record straight-way my admiration of the author's frankness and sincerity, and of the obviously perfect combination in him of rigid orthodoxy in belief with rigid orthodoxy in practice.

*Rigid orthodoxy?* Yes, that unfortunately is the word. Upon those who have any interest in the welfare of Judaism, and yet do not share Dr. Friedländer's opinions, his book leaves an impression of sadness and disappoint-

ment. The gulf which separates him from the modern spirit is so yawningly wide. No attempt is made to ignore the existence of that gulf; it is rather emphasised and insisted on. It is difficult not to believe that Dr. Friedländer sometimes purposely expresses his orthodoxy in the crudest, abruptest words, in order that there may be no possible mistake as to the uncompromising position which he takes up. He throws down the gauntlet to anything that savours of criticism, reform and progress, with a noble confidence, but also with a certain satisfaction. In reading his book we seem transported out of the nineteenth century. Its philosophy, so far as Dr. Friedländer goes in for philosophy at all—and we shall see that he does not greatly approve of it—is almost confined to the scholastic Jewish theologians of the Middle Ages. Passages from their works are continually quoted, and the author does not seem to realise how different the problems which they sought to answer were to the problems of our own day, and still more how valueless, except from the historical point of view, those answers and solutions really are. As Dr. Friedländer thinks that "it may fairly be said that Maimonides has done far greater service to his brethren by the composition of a systematic code of laws than by his philosophical Guide," and even maintains that "the Guide would scarcely relieve any one of his perplexities in matters of religious belief" (p. 3, n. 1), it seems a pity that these unrelieving philosophers are so often referred to as if they were not merely examples of mediæval Jewish Aristotelianism or Platonism, but of philosophy itself. When Dr. Friedländer leaves the Middle Ages, he does not advance far. It seems odd to get the theory of innate ideas brought forward again in a book which bears date 1891; yet we find it stated quite simply, "The existence of God may be regarded as an innate idea which we possess from our earliest days. This is the origin of Natural Religion" (page 22).

But enough of introduction. Let us now see what our

author's book actually contains. It is divided into two nearly equal parts, entitled severally, "Our Creed" and "Our Duties." This division is justified and explained in a short introduction. The author distinguishes two elements in religion : "The notion of man's dependence on, and responsibility to, a superior Being, and the influence of this notion on his actions ; religious belief and religious practice, or faith and duty" (p. 1). Consequently, the answer to the question, "What is Judaism ?" resolves itself into the answer to the two constituent questions, "What does Judaism teach its adherents to *believe*, and what does it teach them to *do*?"<sup>1</sup> (p. 2). It is at once characteristic of the purely Jewish point of view, that the two elements are believing and doing, not as moderns would rather say, believing and being. And this point of view will be illustrated again from the ethical sections of Dr. Friedländer's book, where the required object is always the production of a number of separate actions of various degrees of ethical importance, instead of that more harmonious and comprehensive good, the production of noble character. But of this more hereafter. It is most satisfactory to notice here that Dr. Friedländer does not shirk or minimise the position of faith in the Jewish religion. There are dogmas—or principles, as he usually prefers to call them—as well as rites. "We have certain dogmas, without which the laws can bear no meaning," and not all of these dogmas or truths "can be made evident by logical demonstration" (p. 18). Why, under these circumstances, it is any satisfaction or excellence that "there is no precept, 'thou shalt believe,'" or that "nowhere in our law, whether written or oral, is a *solemn declaration of our creed* demanded"<sup>2</sup> (*ibid.*), it is very difficult to understand. Clearly the old Mendelssohnian theory has not been entirely got rid of. The current opposition to a

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the quotations the italics are mine, not the author's, unless specially stated to be his.

<sup>2</sup> Italics the author's.

supposed fixed type of Christianity still makes itself felt now and again in Dr. Friedländer's book; here it is particularly meaningless. If Judaism implies a belief in certain dogmas, it practically does say, "Thou shalt believe." You can't have your cake and eat it too. This attempt at an impossible combination is not often visible in our author's work, but we shall be compelled to notice one other instance of it almost immediately.

How do we get to know what is the faith of Judaism? The answer practically is, From the Bible and from tradition. "The main source of our creed is the Bible, and among the Biblical books, chiefly the Pentateuch" (p. 19). The Bible is "the Divine Word" (p. 31). How do we know that it is so? Among the many supposed sacred books of the world, among the many alleged divine words, how do we know that the Old Testament is the only genuine work? To this question Dr. Friedländer, like the advocate of every other "divine word," can give no rational answer. But the worst of it is that he does in a sort of way attempt to give one, and lo and behold, it is the old answer of the Jewish mediæval philosophers over again (p. 47). It is really amazing to find the circular argument, that because all Israel heard God's voice proclaiming the Ten Commandments, the trustworthiness of Moses was thereby tested and established for ever, revived and put forward with absolute good faith in the nineteenth century. Assuming Exodus xix. to be verbally accurate, it follows that the whole Pentateuch is verbally accurate, and that the Bible is the divine word!

Why not say frankly, I choose to believe the truth of the Bible, and of the Bible only, although I am unable to prove it? Why not, in the next place, say frankly, I choose to believe that all that the Bible says is true, although it be contrary to science, although it be contrary to reason? Dr. Friedländer is tolerably willing to accept this second antinomy; but he still is on the look-out for some half-and-half reconciliations.

On the one hand, we are told that while, in answering the question what does Judaism teach its adherents to believe, "recourse may be had to philosophic speculation . . . the result must be rectified by the teaching of the Torah" (p. 2). Then, again :

All attempts to substitute human reason for Divine authority have failed (p. 29). In all things that surpass our power we cannot do better than follow the guidance of the Divine word (p. 31). We must not presume to criticise the Divine decrees therein recorded (p. 327).

But on the other hand we are told :

There is no real conflict between faith and reason (p. 6). [The truths taught in the Bible] are not contradicted by common sense, or by the results of scientific research (p. 3). The examination of our doubts will prove that none of the truths which the Almighty revealed to mankind are contrary to reason (p. 7).

But what does all this mean? Simply that, in our author's case, faith has so completely got reason under control, that Dr. Friedländer's faith is not in conflict with Dr. Friedländer's reason. But if I, coming to Dr. Friedländer, say to him, Your faith conflicts with my reason; miracles, for example, are to me irrational, and yet you show that the belief in them is part of Judaism—will he tell me to sacrifice reason to faith, or faith to reason? Or may I "suspend judgment," and believe neither faith nor reason, halting irresolute between the two? Or may I interpret miracles "figuratively"? For in a very curious passage Dr. Friedländer tells us that—

When we discover a contradiction between a Biblical statement and the dictates of our reason, we are sure that we have erred either in the right understanding of the words of the Bible, or in our reasoning. On finding the mistake in our reasoning we abandon what we have hitherto considered as fully established; but so long as we are unable to discover where our reasoning is faulty, we either suspend our judgment for the present, and consider the question as one of the problems which we have not yet been able to solve satisfactorily, or, whenever possible, we attempt to reconcile by figurative interpretations the teachings of the Bible with the results of our research (p. 176).

Then, too, how about faith and science, which, by the way, so far as we believe in its results, is only a synonym for reason? The conflicts between Genesis and Geology, between Genesis and Astronomy, between Genesis and Biology, are too obvious to have escaped our author's attention. Indeed, on p. 34, he summarises the discrepancies very fairly. But, alas, why does he not content himself with an assertion of his preference for Genesis over science, and with pointing out how, as one scientific theory has so often given way to another—

There is no reason why we should not in the present conflict assume, *prima facie*, that the scientific and philosophical dogmas now in favour, alike with Jews and non-Jews, will have their time, and will ultimately give way to other theories, and the present conflict will then likewise terminate, dying a natural death (p. 36, cf. p. 178)

Unfortunately Dr. Friedländer has apparently an uncomfortable suspicion, either that the theories "now in favour" will not "give way" to others for a long time, or perhaps that the others may be no more tender to Genesis and Faith than their predecessors, for on one point he goes out of his way to reconcile Faith and Science with a new theory of his own. The theory is devised to meet the scientific dogma of Evolution. It is intimately connected with Dr. Friedländer's conception of God, as the perpetual worker of miracles, that is, of "deviations from the regular course of nature." Now, the ascertained laws of nature at present in existence, and all the evidence of geology and zoology, point to a slow and secular evolution of the earth and its inhabitants, in violent contradiction to the first chapter of Genesis; but we may all the same believe that—

The Word of God produced in a moment what the natural forces established by the Creator would effect [or, could have effected, *ergo*] by gradual development in millions of years (p. 37).

The evidence of the earth, with its fossils and fossilised animals, seems to show irresistibly that the World was not

created in six days. But Dr. Friedländer gets over the difficulty by the following statement :—

The various strata of the earth, *whatever forms they contain* [i.e., pre-Adamite animals and all !], cannot with certainty be described as the results of development ; they may *just as well* have come directly from the hand of the Creator (p. 182).

Apparently, therefore, God's only object in creating the fossils was to lead man astray in the deductions he would draw from them, to mock poor, human reason that has formed the false conception of a changeless God. But, seriously, is it not painfully obvious that this strange idea of God creating the world by one set of laws, and then keeping it going by an entirely different set, degrades the conception of Deity to that of an Almighty conjuror, a deceiving, if omnipotent, magician ? To such curious straits is the purest faith driven, when, not content with its own province, it attempts to argue with science and devise impossible reconcilements.

Equally unsatisfactory is it when difficulties are met by harmonising. This method does no harm to science, but no good to faith. An instance of it is the way in which the other difficulty suggested by the first article of Maimonides' thirteen—nobly taken to include the literal truth of the first chapter of Genesis—is met and explained away. The difficulty itself is stated most clearly and succinctly :—

In the Bible man is described as the aim and end of the whole creation. ...Earth is the centre round which the whole universe revolves (pp. 34, 182).

Science contradicts both these propositions. The explanation of the discrepancy is as follows, and it may be left to the reader to discover what relation this explanation bears to the difficulty which it is supposed to explain. Dr. Friedländer's statements conflict possibly neither with the Bible nor with science, but do they in the least degree reconcile the one with the other ?

It is true that the earth is one of the most insignificant bodies in

the universe [can it then be the centre ?], and man is a small portion of the creatures on earth, and yet it is neither impossible nor unreasonable to believe that the benefits which man derives from the various parts of the creation—from the sun, the moon, and the stars—were essential elements in the scheme of the All-wise Creator (p. 37). Whatever view the authors of the Biblical books held as regards the systems of the universe, whether they placed the earth in the centre or not, whether all the stars and systems of stars existed, in their opinion, only for the sake of the earth and for the benefit of man [*in the Bible man is described as the aim and end of the whole creation*, p. 34], their object was to address man, to instruct him, and to teach him the omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness of God. For this reason the account of the Creation is given in such a manner that man should be able to reproduce in his mind the work of each day of the Creation, to view it from his standpoint, and to recognise the benefits each day's work bestowed on him. The fact that other beings are benefited at the same time, and that the benefit they derive is likewise part of the Creator's design, is by no means denied by those who believe that the well-being of man was included in the design of the Creator (pp. 182-183).

While pointing out that as regards the truths of the Bible "it matters little how we arrange them . . . provided we believe in them implicitly" (p. 19), Dr. Friedländer accepts the Articles of Faith drawn up by Maimonides, and groups all the details of "our Creed" under one or other of the Maimonidean thirteen. The Jewish doctrine of God—apart from the doctrine of Revelation—is thus subsumed under the first five of these principles, as well as under the tenth and eleventh.

Under the first four articles Dr. Friedländer speaks of God as the Creator, and of his Unity, Incorporeality, and Eternity. Under the tenth falls his Omniscience. This practically contains the whole of what our author has to say about God in himself and in his relation to the world. The general effect produced is not entirely satisfactory. It might be said that at the present time nobody doubts the eternity and incorporeality of deity. These are not the questions on which clear exposition is needed. What we want to know about is the attitude which orthodox

Judaism takes up in regard to God's relation to the world. Does it teach an immanent or a transcendent God, or a God who is at one and the same time both? Now Dr. Friedländer is painfully silent upon this momentous question, but the general impression is that his conception of the deity is very transcendental. He seems to rule the world as from without—rule it, too, as we have seen, now in one way and now in another, and frequently, as we have still to see, changing his purpose in answer to the petitions of man. Dr. Friedländer succinctly, if too one-sidedly, states the relation between Deism and Theism thus :—

Theism and Deism have this in common, that both assume a spiritual power, a divine being, as the cause and source of everything that exists. They differ in this : to Theism this power is immanent in us and the things round us ; Deism considers this power as separate from the things (p. 29).

Dr. Friedländer rejects both Deism and Theism, but unfortunately nowhere informs us which of the two is right in the vital point of difference, or whether there is a third doctrine which combines the truth in each by raising them, Hegelian-wise, to a higher unity. Thus it is that the doctrine of God's omnipresence, so far more difficult and important than his eternity, is nowhere definitely stated or explained. This is a very serious omission. Dr. Friedländer alludes in a few places to God's ubiquity (*e.g.*, pp. 42, 423), and quotes (p. 149) "David's" great psalm (the 139th) approvingly, but he never explains or expounds the attribute which yet, as I have said, craves exposition and explanation so far more urgently, both in itself and for the present time, than the doctrine of God's bodilessness or eternity. God is one, and yet he is near ; he is everywhere throughout the infinity of space. How is all this possible if it be not precisely because, as the Theists hold, God is "immanent in us and the things around us"? Because this grave question of the divine Immanence or Transcendence is ignored, that which Dr. Friedländer has to say

about God's unity is vague and negative. The divine Unity seems to have become a sort of fetish, of which no rational and soul-satisfying explanation can be given. In the sense that there is only one divine Being, God's unity is obvious. But what does the attribute mean in itself, and as instinct or inherent in the divine nature? We know what Plato meant by it—self-consistency and changelessness—but that is precisely what, as regards God's relation to the world, Dr. Friedländer does not and cannot mean. All we get is some scholastic argumentations on the divine attributes, with indirect reference to the doctrine of the Trinity.

Attributes are assigned to God both in the Scriptures and in our Prayers. We must not, however, forget that such attributes do not describe anything inherent in the Divine Being, but only God's relation to man and His actions in such terms as are intelligible to human beings. Most of the attributes are interpreted as being of a negative character, indicating what we must not say of God. When we speak of the Will, Wisdom, and Spirit of God, we do not speak of anything separate from the Divine Being, but of the Divine Being Himself. The Jewish doctrine of the unity of God does not admit any kind of dualism in the Divine Being, and therefore rejects the existence of Divine Attributes as distinct from God Himself. He is One, simple and indivisible. Even this property of being One seemed to some theologians to be contrary to strict unity, and we are therefore taught that we must not understand it in the sense of a numerical unit, in which sense the term is used when applied to created beings (pp. 39-40).

Will an averagely intelligent person get any clear idea of the meaning of the last sentence in the foregoing paragraph? I fancy that the God of Dr. Friedländer's book, to most of his unsophisticated readers, will still be only a "magnified and non-natural man" with the great addition, indeed, that he "makes for righteousness." It is perfectly true that for a large proportion of mankind this anthropomorphic God is the only God whom they can ever hope to realise. Nor does this conception of God exclude a grip upon the essentials of religion. But this is not enough. We want to be able to present an acceptable religion to

those who have begun to think, to those who—more or less consciously—find it hard to assimilate the God of childhood with the principles of science, to those for whom the conception of the external heavenly Ruler has become a philosophical impossibility. Such people must be preserved for religion and Judaism by a presentation of the doctrine of God at once less child-like and less scholastic than that put forward by Dr. Friedländer. God's ubiquity and immanence must be brought into connection with his self-consciousness and will. It must be shown how his co-extension with the infinite does not preclude those essentials of personality which must be retained in any living system of religion. I see no reason why a conception of God answering to these requirements is beyond the power even of Orthodox Judaism. Let us, therefore, for the present hope that Dr. Friedländer's conception is by no means Orthodoxy's last word.

Better than nothing is even the bald statement that apparently opposite ideas must be united in the composite conception of God. The Mishnah, for example, does this, as regards the relation of God to man, in the famous adage : Everything is foreseen, yet freedom of choice is given ; and the world is judged by grace, yet all is according to the amount of the work (*Aboth*, iii. 19). Dr. Friedländer, however, is not quite bold enough to imitate the Mishnaic sage : he attempts a reconciliation, and ends in a contradiction in terms. Thus, on p. 149, he says :

It is the will of God that man should have free-will and should be responsible for his actions ; and His foresight does not necessarily include predetermination.

But also :—

The *entire* past and future lies unrolled before His eyes, and nothing is hidden from Him (p. 148). The misdeeds of the wicked and the sufferings of the pious are foreseen by God (p. 117).

And finally :—

We should not call it a defect in God if His Omnipotence were restricted to things knowable ; *a prescience of things to be determined*

*by man's free-will is contradictory in itself and illogical,* and to say that God would not be omniscient if He did not know them is as absurd as to say that God would not be omnipotent if He could not make twice two to be three (p. 221).

But are not the "misdeeds of the wicked," on p. 117 "foreseen by God," on the accepted authority of the book of Daniel, among the "things to be determined by man's free-will," a prescience of which by God is, on p. 221, declared to be "contradictory and illogical"? Surely *Aboth* iii. 19, is better than this: the old Rabbi grasped the nettle firmly and escaped unscathed.

Maimonides' fifth article declares that to God, and to God alone, it is right to pray. It implies, therefore, according to Dr. Friedländer, that "God can fulfil our petitions." "We believe in the efficacy of prayer" (p. 183). Our author's doctrine of prayer is to be gathered not only from the notes to this article (pp. 183-189), but also from other places where prayer is treated as one of "our duties towards God with reference to speech" (pp. 278-285), and, again, where it is discussed as an element in divine worship (pp. 418-444). It will be convenient to consider these various passages together.

On the subject of prayer Dr. Friedländer is severely uncompromising. He has apparently been irritated—and perhaps not without some justice—by the attempts of those who would seek to retain prayer and yet to eliminate the miraculous basis upon which, as he supposes, it rests. He dislikes vague phrases about communion with God, spiritual aspiration and the rest. He, therefore, says quite plainly and curtly:—

The immediate effect sought to be obtained by this act (*i.e.*, by prayer) is the fulfilment of our wishes. Every such fulfilment implies a miracle, a deviation from the regular course of nature (p. 184).

Later on Dr. Friedländer, in a kindlier mood perhaps, so far modifies this vigorous statement as to say that the desire to obtain from God "certain things which we have not" is only one "among the various motives that impel

us to seek communion with our Father" (p. 422). But, on the whole, it may be said that the main idea of prayer to Dr. Friedländer is that of a request, prayer for something. Those who not only "thought," but still think "it incompatible with the notion of God's Unity and Immutability that he should be moved by man's prayer to do something which otherwise He would not have done" (p. 184), feel something painfully repellent in Dr. Friedländer's attitude. He seems to say to us: Hands off; you have no part nor lot in this matter; you do not believe in the efficacy of prayer. I turn to the early work of a great living Christian teacher; he also speaks of the efficacy of prayer, and yet we seem to hear in him a different note, and we can follow and accept his words.

Of what nature that prayer is which is effectual to the obtaining of its requests is a question of the same kind as what constitutes a true faith. That prayer, we should reply, which is itself most of an act, which is most immediately followed by action, which is most truthful, manly, self-controlled, which seems to lead and direct, rather than to follow, our natural emotions. That prayer which is its own answer, because it asks not for any temporal good, but for union with God. That prayer which begins with the confession, "We know not what to pray for as we ought"; which can never by any possibility interfere with the laws of nature, because even in extremity of danger or suffering, it seeks only the fulfilment of His will. That prayer which acknowledges that our enemies, or those of a different faith, are equally with ourselves in the hands of God; in which we never unwittingly ask for our own good at the expense of others. That prayer in which faith is strong enough to submit to experience; in which the soul of man is nevertheless conscious not of any self-produced impression, but of a true communion with the Author and Maker of his being.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Jowett, *The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans, with Critical Notes and Dissertations*. Second Edition, 1859, Vol. II., p. 247. Compare also this statement from the recent work of another Christian teacher belonging to a very different school: "The very sequence of petitions in the Lord's prayer contradicts as forcibly as possible the crude notion that prayer is an arbitrary process, by which we induce God to do what we happen to want, and drag His action down to the level of our short-sighted desires. . . . [It] makes it impossible

Apart from this question as to the object of prayer, we find a double tendency at work in Dr. Friedländer's mind. On the one hand, he is well aware of the spiritual nature of prayer, and says some excellent things about it. Thus, he tells us that "it is not the language that determines the value of prayer, but the devotion of the heart" (p. 420); and, again, that "equally indifferent with regard to the value of prayer are its length and its form" (p. 421). But, on the other hand, there exists the established ritual, with its fixed and lengthy prayers, which it is a "duty" for every Israelite to repeat daily. Thus it is that we find the marked and even strained effort to reduce prayer to "audible speech," and then to written formulæ. His main argument is well worthy of attentive consideration, though it would take too long to inquire into its exact measure of truth :—

Thoughts and feelings that remain unspoken are seldom permanent. We soon cease to be conscious of them ourselves, and they often disappear without leaving any trace behind them; whilst sentiments and ideas expressed in words become strengthened, and take a deeper and firmer root in our hearts. The relationship between our lips and our heart is, therefore, of mutual benefit to both. The words uttered with the lips receive their value and importance from the heart, and the emotions of the heart derive strength and support from the lips. . . . Our desire to please Him whom we love sincerely, our longing for an opportunity to do what is good in His eyes, ought not to remain hidden and silent. The sooner and the more frequently we give expression to these wishes in audible words, the sooner do they become realised, and the sooner are the promptings of our heart followed by deeds (pp. 279, 280).

Private devotion, "alone to the Alone," is, I fancy, the true touchstone and test of prayer, without which public worship would want its basis, to which it is at best but

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to attribute any arbitrary power to prayer. Its power, we learn—the power of our sonship—is not power to override God's law, but to co-operate with it it depends on our intelligent co-operation with the divine method." *The Incarnation of the Son of God*; Bampton Lectures for 1891, by the Rev. Charles Gore, pp. 125, 126.

complementary. Probably no one gains the full benefit from public worship who has not the capacity and habit of private devotion—of prayer, that is, without a fixed code of words, spontaneous, the offspring of circumstance. Dr. Friedländer, with very doubtful truth, reverses this relation. He admits, indeed, perhaps somewhat too easily, that—

If, yearning for communion with God, we fervently appeal to Him in solitude, where we are undisturbed by the intrusion of any other person, *it will not be long* before we shall feel ourselves in the very presence of Him who is nigh to all those who call upon Him in truth (p. 284).

But in the very next page he urges that, while “such moments of solitary devotion are very precious, and are by no means to be despised,” “*they are not frequent, and not always successful.* Public worship has this advantage,” etc., etc. (p. 285). And in the section on the ritual, Dr. Friedländer gives full rein to his love of precept and rule in all departments of religion, ending up with the following strange paragraph, which, though it deals only with Blessings, seems to throw a flood of light upon the author's general views as to the relative worth of fixed prayer and spontaneous devotion:—

No restriction is enforced upon us if we desire on our part to give expression to our feeling of gratitude and reverence toward the Almighty in our own words on occasions not provided for in the ancient forms of benedictions and prayers. In order, however, to make a distinction between the forms of obligatory *berachoth* fixed by our sages and the optional ones introduced by ourselves, we do not employ the words, “O Lord our God, King of the Universe,” which are essential in the former (p. 444).

I pass over Revelation for the moment, and turn to the eleventh article. It is of great interest to know what attitude modern Jewish orthodoxy takes up on the question of Divine Retribution; for to the outsider there are a number of contradictory voices to be heard on this subject in the Bible, and one is eagerly expectant to learn which of these is now adopted, and which, therefore, are explained

away. There are few religious questions on which clear teaching is more desirable ; but, unfortunately, clear teaching is just that with which Dr. Friedländer does not here provide us. Is this the fault of Dr. Friedländer, or of modern orthodoxy in general ? Has he not made up his own mind, or is orthodoxy still irresolute ? At any rate, we shall observe in his book an unsatisfactory vacillation, together with, I am sorry to say, a still more unsatisfactory omission.

Says the eleventh article : "I believe, with perfect faith, that God rewards those that keep his commandments, and punishes those that transgress them." This is undoubtedly the general doctrine of the Hebrew scriptures, to which, moreover, it must be added that both reward and punishment are there supposed to be allotted in this world and not in another. In addition, the Old Testament teaches now and again the solidarity of society as regards sin, and the hereditary transmission of punishment. With all these doctrines, contradicted as they so often are by experience, and not infrequently in the Bible itself, Dr. Friedländer refuses to break once and for all ; but neither does he venture to accept them without exception or demur. It is true that our author declares that—

We understand the doctrine of retribution only in its general outlines. We are convinced of the truth of the divine words, "There is no peace to the wicked" ; but how the law is applied in every single case is known to God alone (p. 151).

So far so good ; and it would, perhaps, have been better had nothing more been said on the subject ; but, as we shall soon see, this plan was not followed. Here, again, the sage of the Mishnah grasped his nettle. He says :—"It is not in our power to explain either the prosperity of the wicked or the afflictions of the righteous." Dr. Friedländer, has a shot, so to speak, at several explanations, is not quite satisfied with any, and leaves out the most important of all. To begin with, he asserts the doctrine, "Obedience to God's word is followed by his bless-

ings, while disobedience is the cause of ruin and misery" (p. 143). And not only for communities, but also for individuals: "Our success [*in what* is not explained] depends on our obedience to the will of God" (p. 436). The first explanation of the apparent violation of these alleged principles of divine government in actual experience is that possibly the seeming good are really evil, and the seeming evil are really good. This supposition is illustrated by the story of Cain and Abel. So far, then, the doctrine is still maintained, though Dr. Friedländer has not the courage to allude to and disown the absurd applications of it in *Aboth* v. ii., *seq.*, and the hateful passage in *Sabbath* ii. 6, which still pollutes the liturgy. The second suggestion is that the success of the wicked is only temporary. The third, that it is illusory; while the pious—let me add, what Dr. Friedländer omits—in the midst of trouble, can still enjoy the bliss of their communion with God (p. 153). The fourth suggestion is that, in another world, "everlasting happiness will more than compensate for the absence of material and transient success in this life" (p. 155). The fifth and last suggestion is that the problem is insoluble (p. 154). But is it not a very strange thing that the educational value of suffering is never touched on at all—that this sixth suggestion, which, because it is Biblical, lay ready to our author's hand, is never hinted at or alluded to? Could not something of real value and moment have been made out of such passages as Deut. viii. 5; Ps. xciv. 12, cxix. 67, 71; Prov. iii. 11, 12; Job v. 17? Again, I am no Talmudist, but it appears that this ethical conception of suffering was developed in the Talmud.<sup>1</sup> I find that one Rabbi Huna said, "Him in whom God delights he crushes with suffering." But of all this there is no word in Dr. Friedländer's book. Has modern orthodoxy rejected it?

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<sup>1</sup> "The Doctrine of Divine Retribution in the Rabbinical Literature," by S. Schechter. JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, Vol. III., pp. 34-51.

Again, as regards the question of social solidarity and the transmission of suffering or punishment from one member of a community to another, and from one generation to a second, Dr. Friedländer is not sufficiently distinct. On p. 63 the story of Achan in the book of Joshua, with the disastrous consequences of his sin, is considered to be "an illustration of the principle that the whole community is made responsible for the crime of the individual till the crime is discovered and punished." Does Dr. Friedländer then wish us to believe that under such circumstances God habitually punishes many for the sin of one? About thirty-six men die because of Achan's sin before it is discovered. And not only that, but when it is discovered, it is not only Achan who is put to death, but *his sons and his daughters and his oxen and his asses and his sheep*. Is not this solidarity with a vengeance? Why not then frankly disown it, as Dr. Friedländer implicitly does on p. 224, where he says: "Of this we are certain, if death is punishment, everyone dies for his own sin"?

In accordance with this acceptance of the new doctrine of the Deuteronomist and Ezekiel, Dr. Friedländer explains away the Second Commandment, not, as I have always been accustomed to hear it explained away, as meaning only that vice (*e.g.*, drunkenness) has an hereditary tendency, but as meaning, more simply and less obviously modernly, that "the bad example set by a man frequently corrupts his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. In that case (*i.e.*, but only then) they will all receive their punishment" (p. 251). (By the way what a singularly vicious old man our author must have had in view who positively corrupts even his great grandchildren!) The truth is that what Dr. Friedländer is really combating when he so emphatically affirms that "if death is punishment, everyone dies for his own sin," is not the transmission of punishment by virtue of the solidarity of society, (against which theory, to judge from his remarks on the story of Achan, he has little objection), but the doctrine of

Vicarious Atonement. Yet here in his opposition to Christianity he goes too far, and not only offends grammar in the interpretation of a famous passage in Scripture, but neglects a most important ethical truth, which has both Biblical and Talmudical sanction.

*The virtue of self-sacrifice is ignored in Dr. Friedländer's book.* Hence it is that while we hear a great deal of duty, we hear little of renouncing love. Yet the doctrine of sacrifice, of suffering voluntarily undergone for the sake of others, is not only taught in Isaiah liii., but also in the Rabbinical literature.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Friedländer has apparently not found himself able to realise the difference between *Vicarious Suffering* and *Vicarious Punishment*. Let me quote on this point from Professor Butcher's delightful essay on Sophocles :—

We notice an important distinction between suffering for another and being punished for another. The first is a natural and physical process (let me also add, "or a voluntary and self-chosen act"), a fact proved by experience. The second implies a judicial act—one which, when ascribed to the Deity, is an unauthorised inference from, or interpretation of, a fact. Punishment implies guilt, and the notion of an innocent man being punished for the guilty is a moral contradiction. The innocent man may and does suffer for the guilty ; that he should be punished for the guilty is inconceivable, for guilt and with it moral condemnation are intransferrable. To speak, therefore, of *Vicarious Suffering* has nothing in it to shock morality : *Vicarious Punishment* (if the full meaning of the idea is realised) is immoral.<sup>2</sup>

"It is emphatically declared in the Talmud that the reward of good deeds is given to the righteous in the future life" (p. 222). Dr. Friedländer is commendably reserved in his remarks about this future life, though he emphasises its material aspect as a scene of reward and punishment somewhat too prominently (p. 166). I am

<sup>1</sup> JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, Vol. III., p. 43 fin.

<sup>2</sup> *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, by Prof. S. H. Butcher. 1891. p. 120.

very glad to see that orthodoxy no longer categorically asserts the resurrection of the body. You may believe in the resurrection of the body or in the immortality of the soul as you please. God "gives life to things dead."

But how this will be done in reference to our own selves, whether we shall enjoy the same life, whether our future life will be an improved edition of the present one, whether *all* will be restored to life, or whether the new life after death will be enjoyed by the soul alone, or by body and soul jointly : these and similar questions transcend the bounds of human knowledge (p. 164).

To those who, with Maimonides, consider that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is "more rational and more acceptable to thinking man," Dr. Friedländer acutely and sensibly replies :—

This may be the case, but we, human beings, a combination of soul and body, are, in reality, as unable to conceive the separate existence of our soul as we are to comprehend the resurrection of our body (p. 165).

On one point, however, connected with this subject, I was greatly astonished by Dr. Friedländer's book. From the pulpit of my own, the Reform Synagogue, I have been so accustomed to hear excellent and eloquent denunciations of the doctrine of eternal punishment, as not only in itself grossly inconsistent with the idea of a merciful or even a just God, but also as un-Scriptural and un-Jewish, that I had come to the hasty conclusion that the teaching which I heard there was the general doctrine of modern Judaism, whether orthodox or reformed. I deeply regret to find that this is not the case. Dr. Friedländer does not assert, but neither does he deny, this horrible doctrine. He says :—

The question has been asked, How long shall the punishment of the wicked last? Will it be eternal? And if so, is it compatible with God's goodness? *This and similar questions do not concern us in the least.* Our task is to do what the Lord has commanded us to do, and to trust, as regards the future, in him who knows best to combine goodness and justice. We must here bear in mind that God's thoughts are not ours (p. 224).

We have now to retrace our steps, and turn to the four middle Maimonidean principles—the group which deals with Revelation. With them may be classed the twelfth principle, the doctrine of Messiah. Here Dr. Friedländer's rigid orthodoxy makes itself most painfully felt. I say "painfully," because I am convinced that this uncompromising attitude is pregnant with misfortune. One might have hoped that orthodox Judaism, like orthodox Christianity, though as yet in a less degree, would have thought fit to make some attempt at reconciliation between criticism and itself. That hope is cruelly disappointed by Dr. Friedländer's book; there is not the faintest sign of concession. If, then, Judaism cannot be reconciled with criticism, what, in the eyes of all but Dr. Friedländer and those who think with him, will become of it? But this sad reflection is by the way. Let us return to our subject and see what Dr. Friedländer's orthodoxy as regards the Bible involves:—

The contents of the (Biblical) books are holy, free from all blemish and error. The books vary greatly in character, in style, and in purpose, but truthfulness is common to them all. *Whether they narrate events or proclaim God's decrees, or instruct and edify their hearers, what they say is true* (p. 57).

Chronicles, then, is as "truthful" as Kings, even when it contradicts Kings.

Again :

The whole *Torah*, including both history and precepts, is of divine origin : nothing is contained in the *Torah* that was not revealed to Moses by the Almighty. . . . The whole *Torah* (except the last few verses, added by Joshua) is the work of Moses (pp. 134, 135).

And lastly :

Those prophecies that referred to the proximate future have been verified by subsequent events, and so also will those prophecies that refer to the remote future and have not yet been fulfilled (p. 132).

We are not therefore surprised that Dr. Friedländer believes in the literal truth of the Paradise story—"Adam heard the voice of God" (p. 47), in the story of the

flood and in the supernatural origin of the rainbow (p. 48). Canticles and Ecclesiastes, to say nothing of Proverbs, were written by King Solomon (pp. 113, 114), while the Book of Daniel is also perfectly authentic; indeed, "the last six chapters seem to have been written by Daniel himself." (p. 117). Even Jonah is no parable, but a literally true story, the crisis of the hero's fortunes being thus elegantly and euphemistically described: "during a storm he was thrown overboard, swallowed by a fish, *and again brought to the shore*"! (p. 81.)

Dr. Friedländer is, however, aware that there exists such a naughty thing as Biblical Criticism, and that silly attempts have been made to disintegrate the Pentateuch. This criticism he essays to demolish on pp. 205-215. The less that is said about these pages the better. I shall only allude to them once or twice when dealing with the peculiar exegesis which is revealed by Dr. Friedländer's book; here I will only add that our author's open-mindedness to understand criticism may be gathered from the two following categorical statements.

1. There is *nothing* in the Pentateuch that betrays a post-Mosaic origin (p. 209).
2. There is *no reason whatever* to doubt the correctness of the headings [of Psalms, Proverbs, Prophecies, etc.] (p. 56).

From Dr. Friedländer's orthodox point of view it is natural that he should maintain the doctrine of a personal Messiah, the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and the re-institution of the sacrificial system. Having regard to certain violent nationalists of our own day, it is very important and satisfactory to find Dr. Friedländer insisting that for the fulfilment of prophecy the restoration of the Jews to Palestine must be miraculously accomplished.

Even if a band of adventurers were to succeed in reconquering Palestine for the Jews by means of arms, or re-acquiring the Holy Land by purchasing it from the present owners, we should not see in such an event the consummation of our hopes (p. 162).

Such a secular restoration would also happily not require the revival of sacrifices. Dr. Friedländer says distinctly :

The mere acquisition of the Temple Mount or of all Palestine by Jews, by war, or political combinations, or purchase, would not justify the revival (p. 417).

But as a dogma we must believe in their revival. Dr. Friedländer from his point of view is not unreasonably sarcastic upon those who, believing in the eternal validity of one portion of the law, deny it of another. What right have we "to criticise the Word of God, and to think we are too advanced in culture to obey the divine commands" ? (p. 416). We ought, therefore, to educate our feelings, and with Dr. Friedländer to train ourselves conscientiously to say that :

However contrary the slaughter of animals, the sprinkling of their blood, and the burning of their flesh be to our taste, we . . . look forward with eagerness and pleasure for the revival of the full Temple service as an event that will enable us to do the will of the Almighty revealed in the *Torah* (p. 417).

It is perhaps an inevitable result of Dr. Friedländer's uncompromising orthodoxy and of his attachment to the traditional explanations of a pre-scientific age that his Biblical exegesis is so curiously mediæval. One way of "employing speech in the service of the Lord," is the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures and their *commentaries*. We cannot but fear that the *Exegetisches Handbuch* is not one of these commentaries. Homiletic use of Scripture is one thing ; exegesis is another. In "The Jewish religion," and it is therefore to be feared in the class-rooms of the Jews' College, they are frequently confounded. Take as instances the strange explanations of the musical headings of the Psalms (pp. 92-94); or again of the heading of the third chapter of Habakkuk "‘Prayer of Habakkuk on account of errors;’ for in it he rectifies, as it were, his previous erroneous opinion" (p. 83<sup>1</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> Very odd too is the mountain of meaning attached to the particle ' (and) in the repetition of the Decalogue, Deut. v. 17 (p. 269).

Sometimes the unnatural exegesis is due to a desire to rationalise or explain away Biblical statements with which even Dr. Friedländer is not quite in harmony. So, for instance, as to Lev. xvii. 11 (p. 416), or Deut. xxiii. 21 (p. 296). So also as to the second clause of the fifth commandment, which is explained to mean that as pleasure and content contribute to health and well being, while anger and trouble produce ill-health and weakness, "*the mutual affection between parent and child is therefore the cause that the days of both the parents and the children are prolonged*" (p. 258). The obvious, retributive meaning of the clause, which conflicts with experience, is thus deftly done away with. Once or twice opposition to Christian interpretation suggests strange explanations. Thus we may account for the translation of Isaiah liii. 4, אָכְן חַלִּינוּ הָוֹ נְשָׂא וּמְכַבֵּנוּ סְכָלֶט "Surely he hath borne griefs caused by us, and carried sorrows caused by us," (p. 224), or the interpretation of the child promised in Isaiah ix. 5, as a "figurative representation of the faith of Israel in the omnipotence of God"! (p. 68, n. 1). Critical difficulties have suggested other perversions of natural exegesis. The obvious inference from the words עבר הירדן, where it means the eastern side of Jordan, in such passages as Deut. i. 1, etc., is got over by saying that "the phrase only means the banks of Jordan" (p. 209). As disingenuousness in Dr. Friedländer's case is utterly out of the question, such a statement only shows how pre-conceived opinions may influence translation and exegesis. Other instances are to be found on pp. 207, 214, 374, n. 1 and 423. Is exegesis of this kind the necessary concomitant of orthodoxy?

Maimonides' ninth principle, according to Dr. Friedländer, means "that *both* the written and the *Oral Law* are of Divine origin, and that nothing may be added to or taken from it" (p. 21). We are naturally very curious to know what attitude Modern Orthodoxy takes up with regard to the Oral Law. In sermons and addresses it

seems to be rather kept in the background, but Dr. Friedländer is by no means disposed to abandon its claim to Divine and to Mosaic origin. It is necessary to scrutinise our author's words on this very important subject in some detail, as they are not always equally clear.

On p. 138 "the laws taught in the Talmud" are divided into five heads:—

(1) Laws directly or indirectly derived from the Pentateuch and called *מן התורה* or *מדאוריהה*, Laws derived from the *Torah*.

(2) Laws which trace their origin to the time of Moses, *or in general to the remote past*, and called *הלכה למשה מסיני* *Laws given to Moses on Sinai*.

(3) Laws originating between the close of the Pentateuch and the close of the Bible, and called *דברי קבלה*, words of tradition.

(4) Laws introduced in post-Biblical times and called *מדרבנן*, Laws introduced by our teachers.

(5) Customs (*מנחג*), *i.e.*, "religious practices which have not been introduced by any authority or based on a particular Biblical text, but in consequence of long usage have become as sacred as a law established by the proper authority" [what the "proper authority" or "any authority" may be is not indicated].

The proof that "oral laws" were revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai (p. 136) is scarcely strong enough to bear its burden. More important it is to ask how many of the above five classes the true Oral Law includes? How many of them are of Divine Origin? Only (2), or only (1) and (2), or (1) (2) (3) and (4)? We want to know this badly, but we are never precisely informed. The practical importance of the answer will be soon apparent. Instrumental music, for instance, is excluded from the Synagogue on Sabbaths and Holidays by Rabbinical Law (p. 428). Now if we knew (a) to which class this prohibition belongs, and (b) to which classes the stamp of divinity attaches, we should learn whether

there might be some chance that this unfortunate Law could be repealed by the riper wisdom of our own times. Again, in the blessing for Chanukah we read: "Blessed art thou, who hast sanctified us by thy commandments, and commanded us to kindle the lights" (p. 410). Now clearly this Law can only have been introduced in post-Biblical times, and falls therefore under class 4, among Laws called מדרבנן. They are then, I suppose, of Divine Origin? But the difficulty does not end here. On p. 141, these very Laws, under which the Law of kindling a light on Chanukah *must* fall, are described as implying "*no addition to the Torah*" and therefore as not contravening Deut. iv. 2.

They are merely bye-laws and regulations as regards the method of carrying out the Laws of the Pentateuch, and are designed to facilitate or ensure their fulfilment, and to prevent ourselves from forgetting or disregarding them.

Can the law to kindle the light of Chanukah be a bye-law to a Pentateuchal ordinance? Again, as to the Dietary Laws. (These, I grieve to say, are emphasized by Dr. Friedländer with most vigorous insistence.) The dietary laws, we are told, "are exactly the same now as they were in the days of Moses" (p. 237). Even the Jewish method of slaughtering cattle (as explained in the commandments comprised now in *Hilchoth Shechitah*) formed part of the Oral Law revealed to Moses on Sinai (p. 463). But one more difficulty remains. Quoting the commandment, "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk," Dr. Friedländer adds, "*Tradition* explains this law as forbidding all mixture of meat and milk" (p. 461). Now, what is meant here by *Tradition*? According to the fivefold division of Talmudical laws, the "words of *Tradition*" are laws which originated between the Mosaic age and the close of the Bible. Their Divine origin is not explicitly mentioned. And anyway, if it is only *Tradition* which explained this law as forbidding all mixture of meat and milk, how can

it be justly said that the dietary laws are "exactly the same now as they were in the days of Moses." We should, at all events, be able to free Moses from the heavy burden of having introduced this unsociable restriction.

Dr. Friedländer acknowledges that the observance of the "second day" is only a *minhag*, but as a custom of long standing it has "become law." As such a custom it would be difficult to abolish, and for all hope of orthodoxy giving way about it, we may as well regard the second day as a Law. According to Dr. Friedländer, its abolition could only be effected "by the national will, confirmed by a *Sanhedrin* which will be recognised by the whole nation as the only religious authority. Until then it is incumbent upon us to adhere firmly to the observance of the second days of the Festivals" (*Ibid.*).

The unnecessary space given by Dr. Friedländer to an analysis of the contents of the Biblical Books (70 pages in all, 9 pages for example being devoted to mere quotation of various adages in Proverbs), is perhaps one reason why divers matters which we should expect to find discussed in any adequate presentation of the Jewish religion are conspicuous by their absence. What for instance is the relation of Judaism to other creeds, more especially to Unitarianism and Theism? We are just told *en passant* that Judaism "is destined to become *in its simplest principles* the universal religion" (p. 2.) What are its simplest principles? Does a Unitarian such as Dr. Martineau, do Theists such as Miss Cobbe and Mr. Voysey, possess these simplest principles, and if not, in what respects are they in error? Is the Universal Religion to be a creed without embodiment? What is the meaning of the Mission of Israel? Has it only an ethical, and no religious content? All we are told about it is that "It was not by force of arms or by persuasion that they were to influence the whole earth, but by setting an example of noble, pure and holy conduct" (p. 156). Judaism, then, is not to proselytise. But if not, why not? Why was the Psalmist all wrong

when he bade Israel "declare God's glory among the nations, and say among the peoples that Jehovah reigns"? On all these vital points—no information.

Again, what is the doctrine of Judaism on Sin, Reconciliation, Atonement and Divine Grace? Ezekiel says in one place, "Make you a new heart and a new spirit," and in a second, "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." What is the permanent connection of those two verses with one another in the sphere of human conduct and the relation of God to man? The casual note on Psalm li. 10-13 (p. 148) is surely insufficient:

God's interference is asked for; he helps man to carry out his good resolution; but man has free will, and the author of the Psalm, in seeking the assistance of God, feels nevertheless the weight of his own responsibility.

Is it merely "interference," or, rather, a constant factor?

What is Sin? Is a person who has broken fifteen Commandments necessarily more sinful than one who has broken ten? Is a "state of sin" a merely Christian conception? What constitutes Repentance? It is not in the Index, neither is Sin, though Caviare, Magicians, and Tithes find a place there. Is "the peace of God that passeth understanding" un-Jewish? Can a penitent know of that peace sometimes better than the average mortal who has done little evil but also little good? In what sense does Judaism believe in the Divine Forgiveness? What is Atonement? I find Atonement in the Index, but only with the addition—Day of Atonement. Perhaps the doctrine of sin and atonement is given there. Let us see. All that we find stated is shortly the following:—"The Day of Atonement is a day of resting, fasting, prayer, and spiritual improvement." Fasting is only one of the "duties" to be fulfilled on that day; "the other duties are equally essential." Further: "*תשובה*, 'return,' is the principal object of the celebration of the Day of Atonement; it implies the following four steps:—

1. *Consciousness of Sin.*—We must again and again examine our-

selves, and try to discover our failings ; our actions and our words must pass in review, and we must remember that, *however good we may be*, no man is righteous upon earth ‘that doeth good and sinneth not.’

2. *Confession of Sin*.—On the discovery of sin, we must have the courage to confess our guilt before him against whom we have sinned ; if it is against God alone that we have sinned, we make silent confession before him ; if we find ourselves guilty of an offence against our fellow man, we must confess our sin to him.

3. *Regret*.—Having discovered and confessed our sin, we should feel pain and remorse, alike for the evil we have done, and for the good we have left undone.

4. *Amendment*.—The regret should be followed by a firm resolve to abandon the way of evil, and not to sin again, even if occasion be given for a repetition of the sinful act (p. 406).

Now on all this one is inclined, first of all, to ask, why is the definite term Repentance not used instead of the vague word Return ? Assuming, however, that Repentance is the object of the Day of Atonement, is the scholastic division of it into four separate steps a satisfactory account of a single psychical process ? During the long service in the Synagogue on the Day of Atonement, an ordered system of introspection into separate failings is doubtless useful, and we may conceivably imagine that, by careful intellectual analysis, a man could split up even a sincere and not a formal repentance into four successive acts. But though Dr. Friedländer does not explicitly say so, we may assume that Repentance should not be confined to the single Day of Atonement. Should it not then be rather described as a form of inward prayer, by which we, confessing that our will and, through our will, our deeds are not in harmony with the divine goodness, struggle in thought with our lower, sinful self, and yearn and resolve in one to become capable of uttering with sincere heart and truthful lips the eternal supplication, “ Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ; with a willing spirit uphold me ” ? And this brings me to a second point. What is God’s part in Atonement ? The Psalmist and Ezekiel already indicate that it is something more and other than the forgiveness

of sin, in the sense of cancelling the punishment which the commission of definite offences might have involved. But Dr. Friedländer, even in his account of the Day of Atonement, tells us nothing about it. Does he think that, like eternal punishment, it is one of those questions which do not concern us in the least? All he does is to quote Lev. xvi. 30, and to assert that the tenth day of the seventh month is the most important of all the holy days, for it is the Day of Atonement on which "God will forgive you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." Apart from the general question, in view only of the many superstitions with which the Day of Atonement is surrounded, would it not have been advisable to be a little more explanatory on so crucial a question? Or is there no explanation? Are we to believe that God does really go through a regular process of annual forgiveness? It seems to say so in the *Torah*.

I turn now to the second portion of Dr. Friedländer's book, *Our Duties*, as to which there will be considerably less to say. For what we are chiefly concerned to know about Orthodoxy is, not its Duties but its Creed.

"Our Duties," according to Dr. Friedländer, are simply so and so many laws, a collection of numerous enactments, some moral, some ceremonial. Legalism is here full blown and thorough going. Now I am not going to discuss the general effects of Legalism upon morality; that would need an essay to itself. But I think the readers of Dr. Friedländer's book will find that one effect of it is that, to quote Professor Butcher again, "Morality is divided into its component elements; in Plato's phrase, virtue is 'broken up into small change'"; that it tends to obscure the fact that, though "there are many virtues, yet Virtue is one; that though there are ten commandments in the decalogue, there is still one Righteousness."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Friedländer boldly asserts that all the Command-

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<sup>1</sup> *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, p. 208.

ments of the Law, be they moral or ceremonial, are equally important. We must not, he says, be misled into thinking

that the Law is divided into important and unimportant precepts. So far as they represent the Will of the Almighty they are all alike, and equally demand our attention and our obedience (p. 234).

Moral righteousness does not compensate for the violation of the dietary laws, neither does strict observance of the dietary laws compensate for the violation of morality. In this respect Piety, to Dr. Friedländer, is an indivisible whole. His words are perfectly simple and commendably frank :

A truly pious man will never imagine that he may freely transgress one set of the precepts, if he strictly obeys another set, that he may, e.g., wrong his neighbour, and compensate for his sins by regular attendance at the place of worship, or by a strict observance of the dietary laws, or the laws of Sabbaths and Festivals : or that he may freely break the latter, if only he is honest, just, and charitable. The precepts have all the same divine origin ; the all-wise and all-kind God, who has commanded us to walk in the way of justice and righteousness, has also ordained the Sabbath, given the dietary laws, and established the sacrificial service. He who selects some of the precepts and rejects the rest substitutes his own authority for that of the Almighty, and places his own wisdom above the wisdom of him who gave us the law (p. 235).

Many Jews who do not share Dr. Friedländer's opinions must have been frequently pained at finding in the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus, the golden rule of morality followed by a minute and now clearly obsolete ritual enactment. But Dr. Friedländer takes the bull by the horns ; he positively glories in the juxtaposition ! It proves his point, and thus he says, with complete satisfaction and complacency :

The commandments "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" and "A garment of diverse kinds shall not come upon thee" stand side by side in the same paragraph (p. 239).

Some of us, again, are proud that the Jewish prophets ignored and deprecated ritual, making the service of God co-extensive only with morality. Dr. Friedländer denies

that they did so, and as both their words and their silence seem to argue very strongly against this interpretation, he has to invent an explanation, which, if our author's perfect and touching faith were not everywhere so apparent, could only be regarded as a bit of ingenious special pleading (p. 237).

All, then, that can be said of Jews who disregard any portion of the ceremonial law is that they are bad Jews (p. 236). In another passage, Dr. Friedländer, however, displays some feeling that the Ceremonial Laws are, after all, subordinate to the Moral Laws in quality and importance; for the object of the entire Law is shown to be ethical and spiritual, and thus, clearly the Moral Laws are ends in themselves, while the Ceremonial Laws are only means to an end outside them (pp. 243, 253). It is thoroughly satisfactory that in treating of the Dietary Laws, Dr. Friedländer does not regard them as mere sanitary regulations. They are not excellent or to be observed, as some people would have us suppose, because they make people healthy or long-lived. Dr. Friedländer retains, indeed, the old Jewish idea that long life is an end or good in itself (p. 261), but he says emphatically, "Holiness is the only object of the Dietary Laws mentioned in the Pentateuch" (p. 466). So long as these laws are enforced and observed at all, this is a most sensible, religious and timely observation.

Dr. Friedländer's own legalism is pure from one special stain frequently ascribed to a legal system of religion. The taunt of fulfilling innumerable commands for the sake of gain cannot be brought against it. This is most important and most satisfactory. The object of the law is, as we saw, purely ethical, "to make us good in deed, and pure in thought, to bring us nearer unto God" (p. 243). Modern orthodoxy on this crucial point can stand a close inspection. I emphasize this excellence the more, as it is so frequently and unjustly denied. So far as man fulfills the Commandments for any other personal end than his

own moral improvement, his motive is purely spiritual. He obeys the Law for the love of God.

He who is filled with love of God is פָּסַר יְהִיד, pious ; he does not rest content with doing what he is commanded, but *anxiously seeks the opportunity* of fulfilling a Divine Command : he is רֹורֶף אַחֲרֵ הַמִּצְוֹת, ‘eager in the pursuit of *Mitsvoth*.’ The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, but love of God is the aim and end of all our religious thinking and striving (p. 274).<sup>1</sup>

Here and on p. 243 we have, I am sure, the real Dr. Friedländer, and a true expression of Modern Orthodox Judaism, but the necessity of accepting *all* tradition makes discordant voices now and again heard. The idea of *merit* is not wholly and everywhere removed from the performance of *Mitsvoth*. Thus, for example, on p. 492 we read that “every act of piety in honour of the deceased is a *meritorious* religious act, a *Mitsrah*,” and, consequently, that “attending the dead to their last resting-place is one of those *Mitsvoth*, ‘the fruits of which a man enjoys in this world, while the stock remains for him in the world to come.’” This comes dangerously near to the supposed Catholic doctrine of “good works.” It is a distinct moral blemish and should be removed.

Pure as Dr. Friedländer’s legalism is, it seems to the outsider somewhat painfully oppressive. All life is mapped out in endless duties. As he himself says :

Every movement of his (*i.e.*, the pious Jew) is regulated by the law, and wherever he turns he is met by a Divine precept that elevates his heart towards him who gave us the law (p. 467).

Laws. Laws. Laws. All through life and even in death. There are laws for the death-bed—both for the chief actor and for the standers-by. It is even necessary to state (as a law ?) that when “life has come to an end, friends and relations give free expression to their grief”

<sup>1</sup> The italics are the author’s. I wonder Dr. Friedländer did not here quote the famous adage of Antigonus (*Aboth*, i. 3) or that other fine passage (*Abodah Zarah*, 19a) cited by Mr. Schechter, JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, Vol. III., p. 49.

(p. 491). Even grief, it appears, needs to be told when it may be free; it is ordered to express itself. Perhaps those who have not lived under the law cannot properly criticise it. And no one can be more convinced than I that the law has *not* been a burden to orthodox Jews ever since the early days of Rabbinism. But certainly Dr. Friedländer's presentation of life under the law seems pre-eminently unattractive. Can any other exponent of orthodoxy explain the impression away?

Dr. Friedländer's ethics are set forth to us in the form of innumerable duties. There are duties towards our superiors, our equals, our inferiors, and ourselves. There are duties also towards our fellow men in general, and there are some elements of morality which come under the head of duties towards God. The result of this minute splitting up of virtue is that the end of morality, the production of noble character, is considerably obscured. But not to enter upon the general question, I will confine myself to the following observation, nor will I ask how far the fault is Dr. Friedländer's or how far not his at all, but that of the legal form under which his ethics are presented. It must, however, not be forgotten that this question, here purposely ignored, is of the utmost religious importance. The fault, then, which I find is that Dr. Friedländer's ethics are wanting in spontaneity, warmth and enthusiasm. His virtuous man fulfils a number of duties, but his morality all the same seems cautious and cold, rather negative than positive, and dashed with more than a spice of Philistia. We saw before how the idea of sacrifice was wanting in the creed section of our author's book: it is equally wanting in the ethical section. Is love a too Christian word? And yet she was no orthodox Christian who wrote of the "eternal marriage between love and duty," or how "men still yearn for the reign of peace and righteousness, still own *that* life to be the highest which is a conscious voluntary sacrifice."

There may be an unpractical idealism, but there may also

be ethics which are not ideal enough. Who will be stirred to higher things by such bidding as this?—

In the struggle for wealth we must not entirely suppress the claims of our moral and intellectual wants (p. 321).

“Who steals my purse steals trash,” said Iago, but the villain exaggerated. It should rather be put thus:

Many of us—nay, all right-minded persons—are more anxious for the good name acquired through integrity of character than for the safety of their property (p. 298).

Will the relation between master and man, mistress and maid, about which so many masters and so many mistresses need vigorous ethical castigation, be bettered, will the conscience of the “superior” be quickened, by the following?—

On the part of the master it is necessary that he should consider his servant as a human being, like himself, who has a right to expect due reward for faithful service (p. 316).

Even charity is divided up into classes and kinds, and no part of it seems exempt from the rule of law. And certainly the rich, according to Dr. Friedländer, have an easy time of it. I fully admit that the average decent citizen does no more than what Dr. Friedländer says he ought to do.<sup>1</sup> But the question is, would even he do as much as he does, and would the few above the average do more, if either class were not stimulated by a high, yes, even by an unattainable ideal.

Dr. Friedländer, indeed, objects to almost all extremes. “Avoid extremes, and hold to the golden mean is an excellent rule that leads us safely through the various conditions of life, and wards off many troubles and dangers” (p. 324). He works it out in detail, and the living result would certainly be a “self-reliant,” “modest,” “firm,” “calm,” “discreet,” “temperate,” “economical,” and

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<sup>1</sup> “Those who are fortunate enough to possess more than is wanted for the necessities of life are expected to spend part of the surplus in relieving those who possess less than they require for their maintenance” (p. 316).

"dutiful" individual. He would have all the virtues, and be a most model and respectable citizen (p. 325). But I cannot help thinking that he would have a touch of self-satisfaction, though not of self-conceit, and more than a touch of selfishness. His virtues are all too self-regarding. Altruism lies somewhat outside the golden mean.

There are two special points of concrete ethics on which a word or two may justly be said. One concerns the relation of Jew to non-Jew; the other concerns women and marriage. As to the first, it need hardly be mentioned that Dr. Friedländer recognises no difference in the great laws of morality between Jew and Gentile. There is a fine passage about usurers, which makes the reader quite forgive the odd interpretation of Deut. xxiii. 21:—

If any our co-religionists take this law as a pretext for imposing upon their non-Jewish fellow-men, and injuring and ruining them by exorbitant usury, they pervert alike the letter and the spirit of the Divine command; they do not act in a Jewish spirit, and instead of being members of a holy nation or the people of the Lord, they are guilty of **מַשְׁנָה לִילָּה**, the profanation of the name of God, and do not deserve to be honoured by the name of Jews (p. 297).

It is also interesting to find Dr. Friedländer declaring that the anti-social or uncharitable sayings in the Talmud have now "entirely lost their force and meaning, and are practically forgotten," and that "Jewish censors" should eliminate such passages in future editions of the rabbinical works—a recommendation more ethical than scientific (p. 313).

Again, it is satisfactory that our author emphatically asserts that, "There is no difference between Jews and their fellow-citizens with regard to the duty of loyalty." And he adds:—

We must fulfil all those duties which devolve upon all citizens alike—such as military service in countries that have general conscription—although such obedience may carry with it a breach of some of the laws of our religion. On the contrary, evasion and desertion of all national obligations is a serious offence against our holy Law (p. 311).

Alas that Dr. Friedländer cannot allow it to be meritorious for Jews to enter the army as privates, even where there is no conscription. But I fear that would fall under the prohibition of p. 469. For some time yet official orthodoxy will, I suppose, welcome gallant majors and colonels to preside at the distribution of prizes for proficiency in religious knowledge, while it will turn a cold shoulder to the gallant private, refusing to recognise in him a man who fulfils a "national obligation."

"But gold and meal are measured otherwise;

"I learnt so much at school," said Marian Erle."

The "Orientalism" in the treatment of women according to Jewish law is well "explained away" by Dr. Friedländer (cp. pp. 427, 471, 473 *n.* 1, 481). He is less satisfactory about marriage. It was not, indeed, to be expected that Dr. Friedländer would move an inch towards the abolition of the Oriental and meaningless survivals of טה and חליצת. Such obsolete superfluities will drop off gradually by themselves. But what might have been expected was that Dr. Friedländer would give no implicit countenance to the Oriental theory of divorce which underlies the Jewish law. It is deeply to be deplored that orthodox Judaism does not definitely say that *its present religious* teaching is that adultery must be the condition precedent to divorce. What would a Christian reader say to such doctrine as this, in which, moreover, it is not definitely stated whether a wife may divorce her husband, as well as a husband his wife:—

In spite of all blessings and good wishes, marriage sometimes proves a failure, husband and wife being a source of trouble and misery the one to the other, instead of being the cause of each other's happiness. *In such a case* a divorce may take place, and man and wife separate from each other (p. 487).

Now, this is not the place for elegant euphemisms. Either "trouble and misery" mean adultery or they do not. If they do, let the misleading euphemism be changed in the next edition. If they do not — then I hope that Dr.

Friedländer may see fit to cancel such dangerous and slippery teaching.

One more word on another part of our author's doctrine of marriage. Believing as I do, that the preservation of the Jewish religion is of advantage to the world at large, I deprecate and disapprove of mixed marriages. The Jews are a very small minority; they can only preserve their religious distinctiveness by intermarriage. Its possible evils must be endured for the sake of a believed spiritual good. So far I agree with Dr. Friedländer; but he is, I conceive, guilty of a violation of that morality which is above and supreme over all differences of creed when he says, "Such alliances are sinful, *and the issue of such alliances must be treated as illegitimate*" (p. 489). This terrible statement is only equalled by the passage on divorce. They are the two—I am glad to say the only two—serious moral blots in a book the moral tone of which is elsewhere commendably high.

The larger portion of the long section dealing with the details of the Ceremonial Law has little interest for the general reader. The only point worth noticing is Dr. Friedländer's treatment of the Sabbath. I fully believe that the Sabbath as so observed is to him a day of delight, but I fear that to ordinary human nature it would be a day of trouble. I note that "*the greater part of it*" must be devoted "to prayer and reading the Bible" (p. 254). On Friday evening "the pious Jew reads the *Sidra* twice in the original and once in the Targum" (p. 476. Fancy when it comes to Leviticus and Numbers). As to prohibitions of work, they are those of the Oral Law. Moreover, here is the undefiled Legalism again—"it makes no difference whether we consider any of them a labour or not" (p. 351). All letter and no spirit, therefore; or if spirit also, then only, as it were, over and above the letter (p. 352). It is interesting that Dr. Friedländer does not appear to sanction the institution of the Sabbath *Goy*. He says: "We must not employ non-Israelites to do our work

on Sabbaths, except in case of need—*e.g.*, in case of illness or fear of illness" (pp. 352 and 359). But though this is apparently the Law, and "there can be no compromise in religion, whether in matters of faith or of practice" (p. 4), we are told that "circumstances force us to deviate at times from this rule" (p. 359). So that we may infer that the strange legal subterfuge of the Sabbath נ"ל is, after all, countenanced by Dr. Friedländer.

In some interesting notes our author has a good deal to say about reforms in the ritual. His remarks are naturally written from a strongly conservative point of view, but they do not absolutely forbid the possibility of improvement and modifications (cp. pp. 447, 454, *n. 1*, and the whole passage from p. 446 to p. 454). It is also interesting to note that Dr. Friedländer does not seem to set his face so strongly against cremation as unfortunately has been done of late by the Chief Rabbi (p. 493). For cremation has clearly a big future before it.

The detailed criticism of Dr. Friedländer's book has taken too long to enable me to make any general criticisms upon it as a whole. Perhaps moreover, after all the foregoing, these are hardly necessary. One takes leave of it with a confirmed impression of its absolute honesty. Dr. Friedländer gives us a picture of the Jewish religion, such as he, at any rate, conceives it to be, both in its belief and its practice. Nothing is extenuated or glossed over. Its virtues are as much truly its own as its defects. Two things more strike me in conclusion. The first is to notice that Dr. Friedländer's religion, intensely legalistic and orthodox as it is, is wholly free from superstition. Many laws and customs in orthodox Judaism there are, which the critical historian knows to have their basis and origin in superstition, but such laws and customs, while vigorously maintained by Dr. Friedländer, are yet, by ingenious explanation, always denuded of their superstitious element (see, for example, pp. 287, 288, 445, 466, and 496). My second point has a wider scope. Do not some of the in-

sufficiencies of Dr. Friedländer's book, which have been noticed in the foregoing pages, arise from this : that orthodox Judaism has not yet mixed enough with the big outer world and with the wide stream of general civilisation ? Hence its utterances seem sometimes provincial, and sometimes out of date. And this reflection suggests another. Cannot that at first seemingly undefinable something which we feel to be wanting in Dr. Friedländer's book be perhaps defined after all ? Is it not the utter absence of Hellenism ? I have already twice quoted from Professor Butcher's new book, but when you have got hold of a good thing why not quote it even thrice ? Here, then, is a passage which exactly expresses what I mean, and while it indicates the fault, also points out the remedy :—

It is in the confluence of the Hellenic stream of thought with the waters that flow from Hebrew sources that the main direction of the world's progress is to be sought. The two tendencies summed up in the words Hebraism and Hellenism are often regarded as opposing and irreconcilable forces ; and, indeed, it is only in a few rarely gifted individuals that these principles have been perfectly harmonised. Yet harmonised they can and must be. How to do so is one of the problems of modern civilisation ;—how we are to unite the dominant Hebrew idea of a divine law of righteousness and of a supreme spiritual faculty with the Hellenic conception of human energies, manifold and expansive, each of which claims for itself unimpeded play ; how life may gain unity without incurring the reproach of onesideness ; how, in a word, Religion may be combined with Culture.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius* (p. 45). I may be permitted to add this personal experience, bearing upon the same subject. One Saturday morning I read out loud to my mother some passages from the Wisdom of Solomon, an early product of that desired confluence of Hebraic and Hellenic streams. On the following Saturday I read her some passages from Ecclesiasticus, in its main teaching Hebraism pure and undefiled. In both cases I hopped about, picking out the plums. When I had finished the extracts from Ecclesiasticus, she said, "That is fine, but I like what you read me last week better." "Why," said I. Quick as thought came back the pregnant answer : "It seemed to go more to the root of things, and it was much more poetical."